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ANNUAL REPORT

TO THE

CITY OF BIRMINGHAM EDUCATION COMMITTEE

OF THE

SCHOOL MEDICAL OFFICER

JAMES R. MITCHELL, M.C., M.B., Ch., B., D.P.H.

FOR THE

Year Ended 31st December, 1940

*In accordance with circulars 576 and 596
of the Board of Education.*

BIRMINGHAM:

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MEDICAL AND DENTAL STAFF.

SCHOOL MEDICAL OFFICER :

JAMES R. MITCHELL, M.C., M.B., Ch.B., D.P.H.

ASSISTANT SCHOOL MEDICAL OFFICERS :

BETHIA S. ALEXANDER, M.B., Ch.B., D.P.H. (*Retired 30/6/40*).
 JESSIE J. STOOKE, L.R.C.P., and S., Edin., D.P.H. (*Retired 3/5/40*).
 EDGAR H. WILKINS, M.B., B.Ch., D.P.H.
 PHILIP R. KEMP, M.B., Ch.B. (*On Military Service*).
 GERALD FRASER SMITH, M.R.C.S., L.R.C.P.
 WILLIAM H. S. MCGREGOR, M.R.C.S., L.R.C.P. (*On Military Service*).
 VICTORIA H. KING, M.B., B.S., M.R.C.S., L.R.C.P.
 MARGARET C. WINTER, M.B., Ch.B. (*Left 9/3/40*).
 HUGH S. K. SAINSBURY, M.R.C.S., L.R.C.P.
 CHARLES LEITH BARRON, M.B., Ch.B.
 MARJORIE M. WILSON, M.B., Ch.B., D.P.H. (*Left 30/11/40*).
 JOHN H. AUSTIN, M.B., Ch.B.
 MARY A. MACHALE, M.B., B.Ch., D.P.H. (*Appointed 1/5/40*).
 KATHLEEN DAVIES THOMAS, M.B., Ch.B., D.P.H. (*Appointed temporarily from 13/5/40*).
 ISOBEL M. G. MARSHALL, M.B., Ch.B., D.P.H. (*Appointed 1/5/40*).
 DOROTHY M. BEAUMONT, M.R.C.S., L.R.C.P. (*Appointed temporarily from 12/8/40*).
 MURIEL S. ROBERTS, M.B., Ch.B. (*Appointed 2/9/40*).
 ESTHER HENDRY, M.B., Ch.B., M.D. (*Appointed temporarily from 2/12/40*).
 KATHLEEN M. BODKIN, M.R.C.S., L.R.C.P., D.P.H. (*Appointed 2/12/40*).
 IRENE HASLEGRAVE. (*Appointed 11/3/40. Left 31/8/40*).

SCHOOL DENTAL SURGEONS :

*J. JESSOP, L.D.S.	*W. A. STOCKWIN, L.D.S.
J. D. COCKBURN, L.D.S.	H. A. COHEN, L.D.S.
J. C. BAKER, L.D.S.	*G. H. B. EDWARDS, L.D.S.
*F. E. HUDSON, L.D.S.	H. LINN, L.D.S.
A. E. T. HUNT, M.C., L.D.S.	R. E. MORGAN, L.D.S. (<i>Left 4/11/40</i>).
C. R. FODEN, L.D.S.	W. G. CAMPBELL (<i>Appointed 8/1/40.</i>
E. DICKSON, L.D.S.	<i>Left 6/5/40</i>)
J. M. DAWSON, L.D.S.	

OPHTHALMIC SURGEONS :

*H. W. ARCHER-HALL, M.R.C.S., D.O.
 *A. W. ALDRIDGE, M.B., B.S.

AURAL SURGEONS :

*F. B. GILHESPY, M.R.C.S.
 *D. J. EVANS, F.R.C.S. (*Appointed 17/4/40. Appointment terminated 30/11/40*).

ORTHOPAEDIC SURGEON :

*F. WILSON STUART, M.D., Ch.M.

ANAESTHETIST :

*J. A. AINSWORTH, M.B., Ch.B., Tonsil and Adenoid Clinic. (*Appointed 17/4/40. Appointment terminated 30/11/40*).

VISITING MEDICAL OFFICERS :

Cropwood and Hunter's Hill Schools : *MITCHELL I. DICK, M.B., Ch.B.
 Shawbury Approved School : *BERNARD E. WALL, M.B., B.Ch.

CONSULTANT MEDICAL OFFICER, BASKERVILLE SCHOOL :

*W. CAREY SMALLWOOD, M.B., Ch.B., M.R.C.P., M.R.C.S.

DIRECTOR OF CHILD GUIDANCE CLINIC :

*CHARLES L. C. BURNS, M.R.C.S., L.R.C.P., D.P.M.

*Part time Officers.

ANNUAL REPORT

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SCHOOL MEDICAL OFFICER

JAMES R. MITCHELL, M.C., M.B., Ch.B., D.P.H.

For the Year ended 31st December, 1940.

INTRODUCTION.

During the year 1940 the School Medical Service experienced "strains" and "stresses" hitherto unknown, but the structure withstood the test, and the Service emerged at the end of the year, perhaps a little exhausted, but none the less an organisation playing very effectively its allotted part in ensuring the physical well-being of the child life of the City.

The Report of the year's work could not, in the very nature of things, follow lines identical with those of former years. The circumstances in which the work has been carried out have been entirely different; the points calling for comment relate to subjects unknown in earlier years, and furthermore, economy of time and labour, as well as of paper, render essential the submission of a Report very much abbreviated.

STAFF.

The Staff of the School Medical Service has probably changed during the twelve months ended 31st December, 1940, as much as, if not more than in any previous year. The "comings" and "goings" are set out below:—

<i>Officer and Date of Leaving</i>	<i>Status</i>	<i>Cause</i>
Dr. B. S. Alexander (30th June, 1940)	Assistant School Medical Officer	Retirement
Dr. J. J. Stooke (3rd May, 1940)	ditto	ditto
Dr. M. C. Winter (9th March, 1940)	ditto	Appt. in Liverpool
Dr. M. M. Wilson (30th November, 1940)	ditto	Appt. in Blackpool
Dr. I. Haslegrave (31st August, 1940)	ditto	Appt. in Leeds
Mr. W. G. Campbell, L.D.S. (6th May, 1940)	School Dental Surgeon	Appt. in Leicestershire
Mr. R. E. Morgan, L.D.S. (4th November, 1940)	ditto	Ill-health
Nurse W. Gordon (31st May, 1940)	School Nurse	Marriage
Nurse G. E. M. Laythorpe (30th September, 1940)	ditto	ditto
Nurse L. E. James (6th July, 1940)	ditto	ditto

<i>Officer and Date of Leaving</i>	<i>Status</i>	<i>Cause</i>
Nurse D. E. Lawrence (31st March, 1940)	School Nurse	Removed to London
Nurse I. Winn (30th November, 1940)	ditto	(Apptd. Tempy. Resident Nurse at National Camp)
Miss E. Richards (10th September, 1940)	Dental Attendant	Ill-health
Mrs. O. J. Evans (31st October, 1940)	ditto	Marriage
Mrs. B. A. Taylor (30th November, 1940)	Bath Attendant	Retirement
Mrs. M. A. Neale (13th December, 1940)	ditto	ditto

<i>Officer and Date of Appointment</i>	<i>Status</i>
Dr. I. Haslegrave (11th March, 1940)	Assistant School Medical Officer
Dr. M. A. MacHale (1st May, 1940)	ditto
Dr. K. Davies Thomas (13th May, 1940)	ditto (Temporary)
Dr. I. M. S. Marshall (12th August, 1940)	ditto
Dr. D. M. Beaumont (12th August, 1940)	ditto (Temporary)
Dr. M. S. Roberts (2nd September, 1940)	ditto
Dr. E. Hendry (2nd December, 1940)	ditto (Temporary)
Dr. K. M. Bodkin (2nd December, 1940)	ditto
Mr. W. G. Campbell (8th January, 1940)	School Dental Surgeon
Nurse M. Thomas (8th January, 1940)	School Nurse
Nurse A. M. Hotchkiss (1st May, 1940)	ditto
Nurse I. M. Winn (1st June, 1940)	ditto
Nurse M. Horton (10th June, 1940)	ditto
Miss W. M. Moss (1st April, 1940)	ditto
Nurse S. White (1st October, 1940)	ditto
Nurse M. R. Gould (4th November, 1940)	ditto
Miss J. M. Hastilow (1st July, 1940)	Dental Attendant
Miss M. L. Williams (1st October, 1940)	ditto (Temporary)
Miss H. M. Harding (2nd December, 1940)	Bath Attendant
Miss I. M. Winn (1st December, 1940)	Temporary Nurse at Shooting Butts Camp School

EVACUATION.

I made reference in my Report for 1939 to the time and attention which was given to the organisation, review and improvement of the Scheme for the evacuation of school children from the City. In 1940 an equal, if not greater, amount of time and thought was given to the preparation of arrangements for the medical examination of children immediately prior to their departure.

In its Memorandum Ev. 8, the Ministry of Health required that children should be medically examined immediately prior to their departure to the Reception Areas, and promised thirty-six hours' notice, in order that this might be carried out. A call was made to General Medical Practitioners to assist in the work, and careful plans were made to enable the examinations to take place. With the co-operation of the Medical Officer of Health and his Staff, the services of some of the Health Visitors were also made available to supplement the School Nursing Staff.

In a joint circular issued by the Ministry of Health and the Board of Education, Local Education Authorities of evacuation areas were enjoined to make an intensive effort to keep all, and not only the registered children, under frequent supervision, in regard to conditions of uncleanness and contagious skin diseases. Clearly this task could not be undertaken by the permanent medical staff of the Education Committee without help, and accordingly, with the knowledge of both the Ministry of Health and the Board of Education, the work of the medical and nursing Staff was reinforced by the help of a number of General Medical Practitioners, specially appointed for part-time service. Between the 14th June and the 18th October, 83,674 individual examinations were made by Assistant School Medical Officers and General Medical Practitioners, as follows:—

Assistant School Medical Officers	...	28,593
General Medical Practitioners	...	55,081

Moreover, between the 14th June and 23rd November, School Nurses conducted 86,662 examinations of children in the evacuable and non-evacuable Schools in the City. Thus a grand total of 170,336 examinations was carried out within this period.

In August the Board of Education issued Circular 1523, in which it was stated "Every child should receive a full medical examination as soon as practicable after admission to School." In view of this, Assistant School Medical Officers were withdrawn from the examination of prospective evacuees and were asked to concentrate their attention upon the examination of children newly admitted to school, but intensive examination of evacuees was continued by the General Medical Practitioners and by the School Nurses. Children exhibiting conditions which needed to be seen by the Assistant School Medical Officers were referred by the nurses to the Clinics. The Nurses were instructed to keep careful lists of the children who would need special consideration when the time arrived for final medical examination prior to evacuation. Such children were to be "followed up" time after time until the condition needing attention was removed.

In the hope that there should be no complaints from reception areas upon the score of uncleanness, 20 parents were summoned at the Birmingham Police Court in June, and fines ranging from 5/- to 10/- were imposed for failing to cause their children to return to school in a satisfactory condition within three days of exclusion for uncleanness. This, it was hoped, would have a salutary effect upon other parents.

Towards the end of November, as the result of enemy action, local complications arose involving some intermission of one of the public services, and it became necessary to arrange, at extremely short notice, for the evacuation of children from parts of the City not hitherto defined as evacuable zones as well as from the areas already designated as evacuable. Indeed, so short was the notice received, that it proved impossible to put into operation the carefully prepared plans for the medical examination of children on the day preceding their evacuation.

Arrangements have been made with the School Medical Services in the various Reception Areas for the provision of treatment for Birmingham evacuees in need of it. Thanks are due to the Authorities and Officers in those areas for the effective manner in which they have attended the medical needs of the children temporarily in their charge.

As I mentioned in my last report, the separation of parent from child as the result of evacuation does not make for the easier administration of the Service, but having regard to all the difficulties inherent in the situation, it may be said with confidence that the children evacuated from this City are receiving, through the School Medical Service in the Reception Areas, attention no less beneficial than would be the case had they remained in the City.

Loan of Staff to Reception Areas.

Following the evacuation of November, 1940, of unaccompanied school children, requests were received from the local authorities in several of the Reception Areas for the loan of medical, nursing and dental staff. Whilst evacuation of a given number of children from Birmingham doubtless threw additional work upon the Staffs of the School Medical Service in the Reception Areas, it did not relieve the work of the Birmingham Staff to an extent which made it possible to second the services of full-time Officers. On the other hand, it is obvious that the loan of the part-time services of officers was impracticable. In a thickly populated area such as Birmingham little time is spent by the medical, dental and nursing Staff in travelling from school to school, or school to clinic, and practically the whole of their official hours are "effective" hours so far as inspection and treatment of children is concerned. Thus the ratio of children to Officer is probably higher than in a country area where the children are very widely dispersed, and travelling within official hours takes up more of the time of the Officers. It is not surprising, therefore, that the requests received from some of the reception areas were somewhat out of proportion (judged from the Birmingham point of view) to the number of children evacuated. Whilst in no case did it appear that the requests made were unreasonable, it did not seem practicable to meet them without reducing the numerical strength of the Staff in Birmingham more than was justifiable, having regard to the number of children who remained in the City. The solution therefore appeared to lie in the appointment by the Local Education Authorities in the Reception Areas, after consultation with the Birmingham Authority, and subject to the approval of the Board of Education of temporary Officers, part or full-time, according to the number of children to be dealt with. This course was commended to those Authorities who asked for assistance.

One Nurse loaned to a Reception Area in October, 1939, remained in that area throughout 1940. Other officers loaned following the 1939 evacuation were withdrawn for duty in Birmingham as and when circumstances permitted.

Overseas Evacuation.

Registration for evacuation overseas commenced on the 20th June. On the 24th June a communication was received from the Board asking that children should be medically examined immediately. In accordance with this request, arrangements were made for 4,778 children to attend school clinics for examination by the Assistant School Medical Officers.

CLINIC PREMISES.

Though not actually open until January, 1941, the new Clinic building in Warstock Lane was virtually completed and staffed by the end of 1940. It will serve a large and rapidly developing district in the south and south-western area of the City, and will reduce very considerably, in some cases by as much as 2 to 2½ miles, the distance to be travelled by children to obtain treatment facilities provided by the School Medical Service at Sparkhill Clinic on the one hand, and at Harborne Lane Clinic on the other.

Towards the end of the year, a scheme was approved in principle for the establishment of a Temporary Part-time Clinic at Ridpool Road School. It will in effect be a branch of the Clinic at Yardley Green Road, and will be staffed by Officers from that centre. It will ease the difficulties of transport for parents and children living in the Eastern Sector of the City, pending the opening of a permanent new clinic.

PROVISION OF SPECTACLES.

During the year 2,580 pairs of spectacles were prescribed at the various school clinics and 2,485 pairs were actually handed to the children.

Mr. Archer Hall, D.O., Ophthalmic Surgeon to the Education Committee, reports that he and his colleague, Dr. A. W. Aldridge, prescribed spectacles for 1,266 children, the errors of refractions being as follows :—

			<i>Mr. Archer Hall</i>	<i>Dr. Aldridge</i>
Hypermetropia	...	...	126	171
Myopia	...	...	74	72
Hypermetropic astigmatism	...		398	178
Myopic astigmatism	...		168	71
Mixed astigmatism	...		7	1
			<hr/> 773	<hr/> 493

ULTRA-VIOLET RAY TREATMENT.

The following table shows the number of children treated, the cause and the effects :—

	<i>Number Treated</i>	<i>Cured or much Improved</i>	<i>Improved</i>	<i>No Better</i>	<i>Ceased to attend before Completion of Cure</i>
Debility	677	193	273	8	203
Rheumatism	86	31	30	4	21
Chorea	13	6	2	0	5
Bronchitis & Asthma	336	112	104	7	113
Nasal Catarrh, etc....	71	25	20	1	25
Enlarged Glands ...	36	11	16	1	8
Otorrhoea & Deafness	15	1	8	0	6
Blepharitis and Conjunctivitis ...	15	5	4	0	6
Anaemia	107	36	38	2	31
Chilblains	30	11	11	1	7
Alopecia	26	11	5	3	7
Impetigo	25	20	2	0	3
Other Skin Troubles	61	23	16	0	22
TOTAL	1,498	485	529	27	457

TONSILS AND ADENOIDS CLINIC AT HANDSWORTH.

With the outbreak of war in 1939 this Clinic was closed, but re-opened in April, 1940, for one session weekly, and in June, 1940, for two sessions each week. An air-raid shelter was provided for patients in the basement of the premises. In November, 1940, however, the Committee deemed it advisable again to discontinue operative work at the Clinic. Alternative plans are being considered, but it is as yet too early to indicate in which direction future developments may lie.

Whilst the Clinic at Handsworth was open 432 patients were operated upon.

AURAL CLINIC.

Mr. Gilhespy, part-time Aural Surgeon to the Education Committee, has submitted a report upon his work at Great Charles Street Clinic, from which the following is quoted :—

“Work at the Aural Clinic has not been interrupted by the War, and the figures for 1940 of new patients seen, show a slight increase in numbers compared with the previous year. Owing to evacuation, it has been difficult at times to keep in touch with the children, but once having done so they have turned up well. Some of the City's children evacuated from Deaf Schools were visited in the country. I have not noticed any appreciable increase in ear, nose or throat troubles as a result of children sleeping in shelters.

Several cases of prolonged otorrhoea which have not responded to local treatment I have taken into the Ear and Throat Hospital for mastoid operations.

As was to be expected, some of our evacuated children have returned improved in general health with coincident improvement of their Nasal and Aural conditions.”

SCHOOL DENTAL SERVICE.

During the year 86,186 children were inspected (as compared with 86,773 in 1939). The children requiring treatment numbered 57,455 (or 66.6 per cent.) as compared with 61,640 (71.2 per cent.).

The children who actually attended the Clinics and received treatment numbered 30,456 (53.0 per cent.) as compared with 32,304 (52.4 per cent.) in 1939.

Quite a number of children examined in the later weeks of the year—just prior to the Christmas holidays—are not included in the number treated. They will receive their treatment early in 1941.

Others, having been inspected, were evacuated before the necessary treatment could be carried out. Many of these received treatment in the Receiving Areas. Reports from two of the Reception Areas are not available, but in other districts 4,870 children have been inspected and 1,960 actually treated.

The number of teeth filled and extracted was as follows:—

Filled	...	2,304	Extracted	...	1,908
--------	-----	-------	-----------	-----	-------

The number of temporary teeth filled was relatively small. The figure (302) represents one temporary tooth for every group of one hundred children treated, as compared with 6.9 for England and Wales as a whole. This shows a continued observance of the suggestion made by the then Chief Medical Officer of the Board of Education in his Report for 1929 that if the time that can be given to conservative work on the temporary teeth interferes seriously with that needed for the permanent dentition, it may well be justifiable to leave alone teeth with small cavities that are still functioning and free from pain.

ORTHOPAEDIC SCHEME.

Rather more children were treated at the Remedial Exercises Clinics during 1940. 1,553 children were admitted and 735 discharged. The following table indicates the type of defect dealt with:—

<i>Defect</i>					<i>Admitted</i>	<i>Discharged</i>
Spinal Curvature and Postural Deformity	...	...	...	...	424	215
General Muscular Debility	...	...	...	...	92	45
Various forms of Paralysis	...	...	...	...	32	13
Deformities of the Feet	...	...	...	...	826	361
Chest conditions, Asthma, etc	...	...	...	...	119	49
Injuries to Limbs	...	...	...	...	41	41
Wry neck, etc.	...	...	...	...	19	11
					<hr/> 1,553 <hr/>	<hr/> 735 <hr/>

In addition, 235 children attended the Remedial Exercises Clinics for breathing exercises following the removal of tonsils and adenoids.

In November, 1940, the Clinic at the Athletic Institute in John Bright Street ceased to function owing to enemy action, but it was found possible to make alternative arrangements by using certain rooms at Severn Street School. The position was further eased by the opening in January, 1941, of the new Clinic at Warstock Lane. This enabled a redistribution of the patients to take place.

A grant-in-aid was made to the Committee of the Royal Cripples' Hospital. The following table gives particulars of the work done among out-patients of school age suffering from non-tuberculous defects during 1940:—

<i>Classification</i>	<i>Out-patient No. of Cases</i>	<i>Clinic Attend- ances</i>	<i>Massage No of Cases</i>	<i>Department Attend- ances</i>
Talipes, Club Feet, etc.	... 55	307	10	381
Congenital Deformities	... 53	173	26	674
Dislocated Hips	... 17	35	2	38
Spastic Paralysis	... 40	129	27	780
Infantile Paralysis	... 77	407	19	855
Birth Palsy	... 3	3	2	44
Rickets	... 83	281	22	520
Foot Deformities	... 240	869	82	1,490
Scoliosis, Kyphosis, etc.	... 60	197	40	1,485
Fractures	... 9	34	6	89
Injuries	... 21	79	12	210
Amputations	... 6	26	—	—
Osteomyelitis	... 9	45	1	48
Arthritis	... 10	32	5	294
Perthes Disease, Synovitis				
Kholers Disease	... 25	74	3	79
Unclassified	... 15	49	26	451
TOTALS	723	2,740	285	7,438

PHYSICAL EDUCATION.

The accompanying extracts are quoted from a report given by Mr. MacCuaig and Miss Thorpe, Organising Inspectors of Physical Training:

"The value of physical education as a contribution to the general health and education of the child is more and more evident. Moreover, well directed outdoor physical exercises and games and indoor gymnastics, dancing and swimming, promote happiness, friendship and a healthy outlook on life. The Committee's policy of holding refresher courses in physical education for teachers and leaders over a long period of years has provided a body of teachers with ability, enthusiasm and faith in the values of physical education. These teachers are now carrying on, sometimes under adverse conditions.

The physical training of boys, particularly those over eleven years of age, has suffered, for the young men who were responsible for the major part of the physical training of boys in pre-war days are nearly all serving in H.M. Forces. Every effort, however, is being made to keep physical training going and to maintain the standard as high as circumstances permit. Teachers of varying ages from 30-65 are applying the type of work they know best, usually the 1933 or 1919 syllabus. In several senior departments, where no man is available, women teachers are undertaking the physical training of boys.

Throughout the year, training courses for teachers have been held.

Although the war has curtailed activities in post school physical training and recreation, nevertheless a considerable amount of important work has been carried on in the Committee's Institutions.

The number of classes in Evening Institutes is naturally smaller, but there is still a vigorous nucleus which, as soon as weather and war conditions permit, will doubtless develop as in pre-war days."

EXAMINATION OF MILK/NEWSBOYS.

The number of children examined during the year ended 31st December, 1940, was 3,034—the number of Clinics used being 291.

There was a drop in the number of children examined compared with the number in 1939 (3,359) but in view of the disturbed condition of the City during the last few months this was not wholly unexpected. Another factor is that the whole of the staff of the Employment Section have been engaged on duties connected with the evacuation of children and the billeting of people rendered homeless, which means that little time has been able to be devoted to the registration and medical examination of milk/newsboys during the last two or three months.

PROVISION OF MEALS AND MILK.

During the year 522,251 free meals were given.

The arrangements for the provision of hot meals have continued on lines similar to those obtaining last year, subject to such minor modifications as have been necessitated by rationing, but with the addition, as from October, 1940, of a second one-third pint bottle of milk to each child in receipt of free solid meals.

The number of children in receipt of free meals has declined owing to the large number of children affected by evacuation, and also to the improved financial circumstances of the parents. The Committee has, however, sought to make the fullest possible provision for children who have no mother, or whose mother was engaged in war work, to receive a hot two-course mid-day meal at a charge of 4d. This service has been in operation since October, 1940, the number of children receiving meals under this scheme was 177—the number receiving meals on 31st December was 1,092.

With regard to the supply of milk under the "Milk in Schools" Scheme, every effort has been made by the Committee and teaching staffs to popularise the scheme, but many circumstances beyond the control of the Committee and its officers or of the suppliers have operated against it in the period under review. During the school holiday of October, 1940, an experiment was carried out at six schools for the supply of milk during holidays. The result of this limited experiment was sufficiently encouraging to justify the Committee in extending the experiment over the whole of the schools of the City during the Christmas vacation. The results were everywhere extremely disappointing. In view of the abnormal conditions, however, it is impossible to say whether the results would be the same had circumstances been completely normal and a regular and prompt supply of milk always assured.

Over a period of 21 months, the Committee carried out a limited experiment in the issue of free milk to children who, whilst showing some signs of malnutrition, were not sufficiently undernourished to warrant the provision of free solid meals. In the light of the report on that experiment, the Committee decided in October, 1940, to give to all Head Teachers discretionary power to grant one-third pint bottles of milk free to any child showing signs of malnutrition.

A Table showing the summary of the returns furnished by the Heads of the Schools with regard to the provision of milk is given on page 14

" MILK IN SCHOOLS " SCHEME : SUMMARY OF RETURNS FURNISHED BY HEAD TEACHERS.

Line (a) Returns for December, 1940

Line (b) " " March, 1939

Line (c) " " October, 1938

Type of School	No. of Children on register	No. of Children receiving Milk under the Scheme of the Milk Marketing Board				No. of Children receiving Milk under other arrangements			Total Percentage	
		Free	For payment	Total	%	Free	For payment	Total		%
Elementary ...	(a) 90,434	1,730	42,830	44,560	49.3	35	2,066	2,101	2.3	51.6
	(b) 129,734	7,192	56,839	64,031	49.0	195	7,308	7,503	5.8	55.1
	(c) 129,643	4,323	52,701	57,024	43.9	154	3,453	3,607	2.8	46.7
Special ...	*(a) 1,568	921	521	1,442	92.0	—	—	—	—	92.0
	*(b) 2,500	1,554	614	2,168	86.7	281	—	281	11.2	98.0
	(c) 2,448	1,610	625	2,235	91.3	149	—	149	6.1	97.4
Nursery...	(a) 234	7	210	217	92.7	—	—	—	—	92.7
	(b) 278	50	153	203	73.0	—	73	73	26.3	99.3
	(c) 132	—	59	59	44.7	—	73	73	55.3	100.0
Secondary and other Schools for Higher Education ...	(a) 4,210	—	1,812	1,812	43.04	—	—	—	—	43.04
	(b) 6,294	—	2,071	2,071	32.9	—	25	25	.4	33.3
	(c) 6,534	—	2,048	2,048	31.3	—	—	—	—	31.3
Total ...	(a) 96,446	2,658	45,373	48,031	49.8	35	2,066	2,101	2.2	52.0
	(b) 138,806	8,796	59,677	68,473	49.3	476	7,406	7,882	5.7	55.0
	(c) 138,757	5,933	55,433	61,366	44.2	303	3,526	3,829	2.76	49.96

* Includes children at Shenley Fields and Erdington Cottage Homes.

N.B.—The figures for March, 1940, are not included, since the return called for by the Board of Education related only to Public Elementary Schools. The percentage of Elementary School children receiving milk under the Milk in Schools Scheme, or under other arrangements at that date was 38.1.

N.B.—The returns at the end of 1940 were adversely affected by (a) Enemy action in the matter of air-raids; and (b) the evacuation of children to the Reception Areas during the days immediately preceding the date fixed for the returns to be submitted—December 11th.

NUTRITION.

In Circular 1523 the Board of Education pointed out that every school should be visited frequently by a Medical Officer for the purpose of carrying out a rapid survey of all the children in the school. The survey was to have regard to the nutrition of the children and to the selection of children who appeared to be in need of supplementary nourishment. As has been pointed out in the paragraph with regard to evacuation, the work of the permanent members of the Staff of the School Medical Service was supplemented by help from General Medical Practitioners specially appointed for the purpose, and Assistant School Medical Officers and Nurses were asked to pay particular attention to ailing children and to the selection of children who appeared to be under-nourished. The classification of the nutrition of the children inspected in the routine age-groups is set out in Table 11. It will be seen that the percentage classified as "Bad" has fallen from 1.4 in 1939 to 1.0 in 1940, but on the other hand, 10.5 per cent. were classified as "slightly-subnormal," as compared with 9.4 in 1939. It has to be borne in mind, however, that these statistics represent the findings of eighteen Assistant School Medical Officers who, for varying periods, took part in the work of the Birmingham School Medical Service. The figures with regard to children showing nutrition "slightly subnormal" or "bad" may be considered to be unduly weighted on the side of subnormality. Certain examiners, some of whom were new to the staff, adopted standards obviously differing from those of their colleagues, and two of them classified as many as 40 and 45 per cent. of the children as "slightly sub-normal."

At the other end of the scale it is interesting to note that 4.1 per cent. were classified as "Excellent" as compared with 2.3 per cent. in 1939.

Normally the number of children in need of and receiving free meals may be taken as a fairly reliable index of the state of nutrition in the Schools. As pointed out above, however, the number of children receiving free meals has fallen owing to evacuation, and the improved economic condition of many of the parents of former recipients of meals has also affected the position. Any deductions as to the effect of the war upon the state of nutrition of the children would, therefore, in my opinion, at present be premature and unsound. The effect of rationing and shortage of certain protective and essential food stuffs may alter the position in spite of economic improvement, and these factors are already under close observation.

SCABIES.

2,255 children were treated for Scabies during the year. Of these, 920 received sulphur baths at one of the four cleansing centres. The total number of baths given was 9,469. Fifty-two of the patients were re-infections.

During the year there has been even closer co-operation between the Education Committee and the Public Health Committee in the treatment of scabies, and in efforts to secure control of the disease. To this end attendance at the Public Health Committee's Cleansing Centre at Bacchus Road has been recognised as the equivalent of attendance at an ordinary School Clinic.

The main problem still remains the control of the disease in the young adults over school age, who maintain infection in the home. The School Medical Staff has under investigation several alternative treatments in the hope of securing a more rapid cure.

UNCLEANLINESS.

During the year 267,072 examinations of children were carried out for the specific purpose of detecting uncleanness. The number of examinations was larger than in 1939, but this was in conformity with the express wish of the Board of Education that all, and not only children registered for evacuation, should be kept under frequent supervision in regard to conditions of uncleanness. As the result of these examinations, 14,098 individual children were found to be unclean. Again this number is larger, but this is not surprising because the examinations were conducted at more frequent intervals, and children temporarily and accidentally unclean, who might have escaped notice in earlier years, were this time caught in the closer mesh.

Although habitual offenders still furnish the chief difficulty in this matter, it is gratifying to notice some definite improvement in standard and in public opinion with regard to cleanliness.

CHILD GUIDANCE CLINIC.

Dr. Burns, the Director of the Child Guidance Clinic, submits the following report :—

“At the beginning of this year we had settled down to a steady routine. This continued until nearly the end, when air raids brought about a temporary diminution of work, owing both to transport difficulties, and renewed evacuation. Slight damage to the Clinic also added to our difficulties.

It will be seen from the figures given below, however, that the numbers have on the whole increased.

It might be supposed that the strain of war would cause an increase of neurosis and maladjustment among both children and adults, and it is a remarkable fact, and a tribute to the stamina and resilience of human creatures, that such has not been the case; there have been few cases where war conditions have been an important contributory factor.

What has been noticed at the Clinic and confirmed by a questionnaire issued to teachers, is the increase in excitability and aggressive behaviour following air raids. Also diminished powers of memory and concentration observed by mental tests: a result to be expected.

There have been a certain number of “evacuation problems” referred, mostly cases returned from billets as being too difficult. They number 36 and presented the following problems :

Problems among Evacuees.

Difficult behaviour—generally “unbilleteable”	...	10
Stealing	... ..	9
Run away	... ..	1
Attempted suicide	... ..	1
Enuresis	... ..	11
Anorexia Nervosa	... ..	1
Sleep disturbance	... ..	1
Extreme personality changes	... ..	1
Epileptic fits	... ..	1

Many of these could have been treated in situ, had psychological advice or hostel accommodation been available in the particular billeting area.

It is possible that more recently evacuated cases will be able to get some form of child guidance where necessary. Many of the problems in billeting areas are nervous children who should not be returned to bombed areas merely because they wet the bed.

We are beginning to get also the child of 7 plus who has missed a great deal of school and is now very backward in his school lessons. It seems likely that there will be a considerable number of children retarded owing to this reason, and suffering emotionally from the consequent anxiety.

It would appear advisable to establish coaching centres, like speech-therapy centres, to deal with these cases who cannot always be adequately helped in school.

In such cases the measurement of intelligence by individual testing applied by the psychologist is of obvious importance.

The policy of boarding out of children on farms under the supervision of the Society in Aid of Nervous Children, continues to be triumphantly vindicated, not only by the gratifying results observed in the children sent, but also in the continued well being of children who return.

Analysis of Cases—referred during period January 1st—December 31st, 1940.

<i>Referring Agency</i>	<i>Number</i>
School Medical Service	83
Special Schools Department	8
Higher Education Department	1
Head Teachers (Secondary School)	6
Head Teachers (Elementary School)	41
School Attendance Department	6
Probation Officers	26
Hospitals	21
Private Doctors	24
Social Agencies	4
Homes and Institutions	4
Private persons	5
Parents	25
TOTAL	254 "

SPECIAL SCHOOLS.

Introduction.

From the following brief statement all the usual statistics and tables have been omitted.

Dr. Burns having found it necessary to curtail the amount of time which he gave to the work of the Education Committee, Dr. Hugh H. K. Sainsbury has since undertaken most of the medical duties in connection with the Special Schools apart from those of a specialist nature.

Evacuation of Children.

All Special School children have continued to be regarded as eligible for evacuation and at the close of the year there were in reception areas approximately 440 such children who had been officially evacuated. It is pleasing to be able to report that not only has the general standard of health of these evacuees been well maintained, but in many cases marked improvement has been shown.

Children Remaining in Birmingham.

Following the provision of air raid shelters, all the Special Schools in Birmingham were re-opened, and by April 1st full-time attendance at all of them had been resumed on a compulsory basis. Unfortunately, late in the year three of the Schools—two for the Mentally Defective and one for the Physically Defective—were so badly damaged by enemy action that they had to be closed. Two have since been re-occupied, but in the case of the third, accommodation is having to be sought elsewhere. The number of children remaining on the roll of the Special Schools at Christmas, 1940, excluding those who had been evacuated, was 1,390.

Towyn Summer School.

During the Spring and Summer, seven groups of children varying in number from 18 to 26 were sent from the Special Schools to Martineau House at Towyn at fortnightly intervals. In addition, two groups of boys, totalling 50, from the Shenley Fields Cottage Homes, and two groups of girls, totalling 55, from the Erdington Cottage Homes spent part of their Summer Holidays there.

Since October last, the premises have been occupied by about 30 very young children evacuated from the Erdington Cottage Homes.

Cottage Homes.

Apart from the children referred to in the last paragraph, 117 children over the age of seven years have been evacuated from the Erdington Cottage Homes with children from the Schools they normally attend, and enquiries are being made with a view to finding suitable premises in safe areas to which more of the younger children can be transferred. Certain structural alterations are being effected both at these Homes and at the Shenley Fields Cottage Homes which will enable the downstairs rooms to be used for sleeping purposes and the upstairs rooms as day rooms. While these alterations are in progress at the latter institution, 50 boys are being temporarily housed and taught at the West Malvern Residential Open-Air School, where accommodation was kindly placed at the disposal of the authority by the Worcestershire Education Committee.

CONCLUSION.

This report would be incomplete without a reference to the willing and effective co-operation of teachers, School Attendance Officers, and Officers of the administrative staff of the Committee, in carrying out the work of the School Medical Service. It is gratifying to record that one has never sought in vain for information or help in the work of the School Medical Service. My thanks are tendered to all concerned.

CITY OF BIRMINGHAM

Education Committee

Appendix to Annual Report

of

School Medical Officer

for the year ended 31st December, 1940

OFFICIAL TABLES

Elementary Schools.

TABLE I.

MEDICAL INSPECTIONS OF CHILDREN ATTENDING PUBLIC ELEMENTARY SCHOOLS.

A. ROUTINE MEDICAL INSPECTIONS.

(1) Number of Inspections in the prescribed Groups :									
Entrants	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	13,775
Second Age Group	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	8,734
Third Age Group	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	6,987
Total	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	<u>29,496</u>
(2) Number of other Routine Inspections									
Grand Total	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	<u>29,496</u>

B. OTHER INSPECTIONS.

Number of Special Inspections and Re-Inspections *91,076

*In addition, 83,674 examinations of potential evacuees were made by Assistant School Medical Officers and General Practitioners, as follows :—

Assistant School Medical Officers	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	28,593
General Practitioners	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	55,081

TABLE II.

CLASSIFICATION OF THE NUTRITION OF CHILDREN INSPECTED DURING THE YEAR IN THE ROUTINE AGE GROUPS. *

Age-Groups	In-spected	Number of Children.							
		A (Excellent)		B (Normal)		C (Slightly subnormal)		D (Bad)	
		No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Entrants	13,775	665	4.7	10,967	79.8	1,932	14.1	211	1.4
Second Age-group	8,734	300	3.4	7,645	87.5	730	8.4	59	.7
Third Age-group	6,987	249	3.5	6,252	89.6	450	6.4	36	.5
Other Routine Inspections	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Total	29,496	1,214	4.1	24,864	84.4	3,112	10.5	306	1.0

*These statistics represent the findings of eighteen Assistant School Medical Officers who, for varying periods, took part in the work of the Birmingham School Medical Service during the year 1940. The figures with regard to children showing nutrition "slightly sub-normal," or "bad," may be considered to be unduly weighted on the side of subnormality. Certain examiners, some of whom were new to the staff, adopted standards obviously different from those of their colleagues, and two of them classified as many as 40 and 45 per cent. of the children as "slightly sub-normal."

TABLE III.

GROUP I.—**TREATMENT OF MINOR AILMENTS** (excluding Uncleanliness, for which see Table V).

Total number of Defects treated or under treatment during the year under the Authority's Scheme 16,589

GROUP II.—**TREATMENT OF DEFECTIVE VISION AND SQUINT** (excluding Minor Eye Defects treated as Minor Ailments—Group I.).

	No of Defects dealt with		
	Under the Authority's Scheme.	Otherwise.	Total
ERRORS OF REFRACTION (including squint).	2,954	172	3,126
Other defect or disease of the eyes (excluding those recorded in Group I)	6	12	18
Total	2,960	184	3,144
No. of Children for whom Spectacles were	Under the Authority's Scheme.	Otherwise.	Total
(a) Prescribed	2,580	167	2,747
(b) Obtained	2,485	167	2,652

GROUP III.—**TREATMENT OF DEFECTS OF NOSE AND THROAT.**

Number of Defects.

Received Operative Treatment.		Received other forms of Treatment.	Total number treated.
Under the Authority's Scheme, in Clinic or Hospital.	By Private Practitioner or Hospital, apart from the Authority's Scheme.		
(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)
432	273	678	1,383

TABLE IV. DENTAL INSPECTION AND TREATMENT

(1) Number of children inspected by the Dentist :

(a) Routine age-groups.

Age :	5	10,494
	6	9,163
	7	9,543
	8	9,648
	9	9,678
	10	9,730
	11	9,018
	12	8,605
	13	7,991
	14	500
	Total 84,370	

(b) Specials 1,020

(c) Total (Routine and Specials) 85,390

(2) Number found to require treatment 56,969

(3) Number actually treated 30,197

(4) Attendances made by children for treatment 37,061

(5) Half-days devoted to	Inspection	562	Total 4,250.
	Treatment	3,688	

(6) Fillings	Permanent Teeth	13,682	Total 13,984.
	Temporary Teeth	302	

(7) Extractions	Permanent Teeth	17,941	Total 81,423.
	Temporary Teeth	63,482	

(8) Administrations of general anaesthetics for extractions 19,711.

(9) Other Operations	Permanent Teeth	2,195	Total 5,103.
	Temporary Teeth	2,908	

TABLE V. VERMINOUS CONDITIONS.

(i.) Average number of visits per school made during the year by the School Nurses.....11.05

(ii.) Total number of examinations of children in the Schools by School Nurses.....267,072.

(iii.) Number of *individual* children found unclean.....14,098.

(iv.) Number of individual children cleansed under Section 87 (2) and (3) of the Education Act 1921.....nil.

(v.) Number of cases in which legal proceedings were taken :--

(a) Under the Education Act, 1921.....Nil.

(b) Under School Attendance Byelaws 105

TABLE VI. BLIND AND DEAF CHILDREN.

Number of totally or almost totally blind and deaf children who were not receiving education suitable for their special needs at the end of the calendar year :—

	(1) At a Public Elementary School.	(2) At an Institution other than a Special School.	(3) At no School or Institution.	(4) Total not receiving suitable education.
Blind Children	—	—	—	Nil.
Deaf Children	—	—	—	Nil.

MENTALLY DEFECTIVE CHILDREN.

Total number of children notified during the year ended 31st December, 1940, by the Local Education Authority to the Local Mental Deficiency Authority, under the Mental Deficiency (Notification of Children) Regulations, 1928